



# City of Milwaukee

## Meeting Minutes

### ANTI-GRAFFITI POLICY COMMITTEE

200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
53202

**ALD. TONY ZIELINSKI, CHAIR**  
**Ald. Robert Donovan, Vice-Chair**  
**Ald. Terry Witkowski,**  
**Scott Gunderson and G. Eddie Paez**

**Staff Assistant, Diana Morgan, 286-2231**  
**Fax: (414) 286-3456 E-mail: dmorga@milwaukee.gov**  
**File Specialist, Charlotte Rodriguez, 286-8797 E-mail: crodri@milwaukee.gov**

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Monday, May 15, 2006

10:30 AM

City Hall, Room 301-B

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#### Meeting Convened: 10:34 A.M.

**Present** Donovan, Paez, Zielinski and Gunderson

**Absent** VACANT and VACANT2

**Excused** Witkowski

- 1) Approval of the minutes of the March 20, 2006 meeting.

Motion by Ald. Donovan to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2006 meeting.

Prevailed. 4-0

*Motion by Ald. Donovan to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2006 meeting.*

*Prevailed. 4-0.*

- 2) Department of Neighborhood Services Update

*Ms. Sharon Blando, Department of Neighborhood Services reported the following:*

#### *Spring Kick-Off*

*The Milwaukee Career Academy will participate in the Spring Kick-Off this year, beginning June 5, 2006 at 1:00 p.m. Displays may be viewed in the City Hall rotunda weekday June 5, 2006 - June 16, 2006.*

*This year the students painted Journal Sentinel boxes, posters etc. with anti graffiti messages.*

*Ms. Blando informed members that during conversation with students regarding graffiti vandalism, most commented that they see graffiti in video games and various media outlets, so they did not realize graffiti was considered vandalism or a crime. She continued by advising members that educating youth about what graffiti is and how it impacts our community is imperative so that future crimes of this nature are not committed.*

*Ms. Blando advised members that when the Department of Neighborhood Services does*

*Community Conferencing for restorative justice, offenders often say they never realized they were harming anyone, most are of the impression that graffiti vandalism is a victimless crime.*

*In addition, Ms. Blando advised members of a reduction in graffiti vandalism on the Southside due to a reduction in gang activity and also the efforts of volunteers abating graffiti.*

*She advised members of an increase in tagger graffiti on residential properties, city signs, buildings, carts etc on the Eastside from North Avenue to Locust and from Holton to Humboldt.*

*The Department of Neighborhood Services has received numerous complaints from the residents in these areas, concerned that the graffiti vandalism will have a negative impact on the property values.*

*Finally, Ms. Blando commented on the positive impact of public media coverage, sponsored by Anti-Graffiti committee members relative to the Troy Mosby case. She informed members that Mr. Mosby received an 18-month conviction in addition to other penalties for his part in extensive graffiti vandalism throughout the city. She informed members that the media coverage also motivated positive community response at the Mosby court hearing that compelled judges to enforce sentencing in the house of correction, restitution and community service. She commented that these measures would help to get the message out about the consequences of committing graffiti vandalism.*

3) Department of Public Works Update

*Mr. Paul Novotony, Department of Public Works, Infrastructure Services, reported the following:*

*The City of Milwaukee continues graffiti removal with bridge and iron painters by over painting, chemical wiping, power washing and soda blasting. Two bridge and ironworkers are sent out daily using a dedicated van with a tow-behind compressor. DPW crews also respond to hotline calls. Recently 6 employees were deployed to the downtown area to clean signs.*

*Problem areas include the Eastside, Riverwest and the near Southside. The increase in graffiti vandalism is contributed to warmer weather. The department is currently preparing the newspaper boxes for the Spring Kick-Off.*

4) Milwaukee Christian Center Update

*Mr. Eddie Paez, Milwaukee Christian Center*

*Mr. Paez reported a decrease in graffiti vandalism on the upper Southside and increases in gang graffiti on the lower Southside, especially in the Mitchell Street area. In addition, The Milwaukee Christian Center has received an increase in telephone calls from the elderly in the lower Southside. Some of the graffiti messages appear to be related to some of the recent shootings on the near Southside.*

*He also advised members of a complaint he received from an individual who had been subjected to vandalism that had been removed by someone. The individual's complaint was that his property looked worse after the graffiti was removed. Mr. Paez referred the*

*citizen to the hotline.*

*Mr. Paez advised the committee that the Milwaukee Christian Center had recently submitted a request to the Community Development Grant Administration for reprogramming dollars for 2007.*

*Motion by Ald. Donovan that a letter be sent by the Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee requesting the reprogramming dollars be restored to the Milwaukee Christian Center in the 2007 budget.*

*Prevailed. 5-0.*

*Ald. Zielinski suggested that Mr. Paez attend the Community & Economic Development Committee meeting when recommendations are made for reprogramming, to speak about the negative impact the reduction of funds has had on the Milwaukee Christian Center's ability to successfully abate graffiti vandalism.*

5) Municipal Court Update

*Mr. Kristine Hinrichs, Municipal Court reported a decrease in graffiti cases in Municipal Court; she commented that this was a continued trend. She also advised members that most graffiti cases are filed in Circuit Court.*

*In addition, Ms. Hinrichs informed members that cases generally filed in Municipal Court are for possession of the tools of graffiti or the sale of tools of graffiti, rather than the commission of the act itself.*

6) Milwaukee Police Department Update

*Officer Kaul, Milwaukee Police Department thanked the Anti-Graffiti Committee and the community groups who offered support relative to the Mosby case.*

*Officer Kaul reported 7 graffiti vandalism related arrest, 4 were state violations the other 3 were issued citations. He advised members that while citations are down as indicated by Ms. Hinrichs from Municipal Court, this is mainly due to the fact the individuals are only cited for possession of graffiti items, he advised that the Milwaukee Police Department's goal is to have all graffiti vandalism related cases receive state penalties.*

*Officer Kaul also offered an update on the Milwaukee Police Department database. He reported tracking of all graffiti in the city including some graffiti in Milwaukee County. In addition, District 1 is currently test piloting the database with plans for all districts to have online ability by the end of June 2006.*

*Officer Kaul submitted written tagger comments for review by committee members, some were comments regarding the Mosby case; others were from an unknown tagger who stated "It's time to step-up and cause more property damage".*

*Finally, Office Kaul advised the committee that he believed the City of Milwaukee sent a good message by publicly addressing the Mosby case that clearly stated the City of Milwaukee would not tolerate graffiti vandalism; however there are groups who legally advocate graffiti art. He advised members that there is going to be a group called T.R.U.E. SKOOL at the south-end on the Summerfest grounds. They are sponsoring a hip-hop and graffiti type culture event, where the group is inviting local and national graffiti artist to attend.*

*Motion by Ald. Witkowski to have the Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee send a letter to Summerfest expressing their concern at this organization conducting a graffiti event, encouraging the creation of graffiti; and that research be done to determine whether the organization is directly or indirectly receiving any funding through the City of Milwaukee.*

*Prevailed. 5-0.*

*Motion by Mr. Gunderson to send a letter to T.R.U.E SKOOL INC. inviting them to attend the next Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee meeting to discuss the committee's concerns and further to obtain an understanding of the intent of the organization.*

*Prevailed. 4-1. Ald. Donovan voting "no".*

*Ald. Zielinski requested Ms. Blando research why a sign ordinance in chapter 244 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances had been repealed and that she report her findings at the next meeting.*

## 7) Public Comments

*Ms. Judi Keller, BID District #4 addressed the committee regarding her concerns regarding conflict between zoning requirements for signage by business owners and the ability of other individuals to create unregulated signage due to the repeal of the city ordinance.*

*Ald. Zielinski suggested that Ms. Keller address the appropriate committee regarding her concerns and request that a new ordinance be introduced to address this matter.*

*Mr. Teig Whaley-Smith, King Drive BID District #8 addressed the committee regarding several graffiti sweeps in his district that involved the removal of approximately 20 tags. He informed members that within several months of the removal approximately 60 more tags were put on businesses.*

*He advised members that his BID District took immediate action to allocate resources, which were matched by the City of Milwaukee funds. They were able to abate the graffiti with the assistance of Mr. Paez and the Milwaukee Christian Center. Since that time they have only noticed approximately 10 tags. Mr. Smith stated that he believes the philosophy that if you remove the graffiti right away it, there are fewer instances of reoccurrences.*

*Mr. Whaley-Smith also informed members that the abatement of the graffiti cost his BID District \$2800, \$2000 was allocated by his Bid District with \$2000 in matched funds from the City of Milwaukee. Mr. Teague commented that if the graffiti vandalism continued the remaining funds would be depleted quickly.*

*Ms. June Moberly, BID District #10 addressed the committee regarding the importance of continued funding for graffiti abatement. She informed the committee that her BID District experiences a very minimal amount of graffiti vandalism; however there are other businesses and neighborhoods who desperately need the continued support funds in order to successfully abate graffiti vandalism. She urged the Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee to continue to support efforts to combat this problem.*

*Ald. Zielinski recommended that Ms. Moberly and other BID Districts who had concerns regarding this matter send letters to the Mayor's Office and the Community & Economic*

*Development Committee requesting complete funding be restored in the 2007 budget to organizations who received cuts in the 2006 budget. He also recommended that BID Districts attend budget hearings in October and November to express their concerns regarding the impact of budget cuts on the cities communities.*

- 8) Next meeting date: Monday, July 17, 2006, 10:30 A.M.